



5-Year Plan (2007 to 2012)

Wahkiakum Conservation District

For More Information Contact: Darin Houpt, 360-425-1880, ccddmgr@teamelect.com

*Picture of Natural
Resource Project*

Organization of the Wahkiakum Conservation District

A political subdivision of the State of Washington – authorities, powers and structure contained in RCW 89.08.

- The Wahkiakum Soil and Water Conservation District was form in 1952.
- The District is governed by a board of five volunteer supervisors, three of whom are elected by residents within the district and two whom are appointed by the State Conservation Commission

Function of the Wahkiakum Conservation District

To make available technical, financial and educational resources, whatever their source, and focus or coordinate them so that they meet the needs of the local land manager with conservation of soil, water and related natural resources.

Who We Serve & Why

Land users in need of assistance with the conservation and management of their resources may seek assistance from the district.

Mission of the Wahkiakum Conservation District

- *The mission of the Wahkiakum Conservation District is to protect and improve the natural resources of the District and to guide resource development and use, to provide the highest quality of life for present and future citizens.*

Vision of the Wahkiakum Conservation District

“Over the next five years, we see the Wahkiakum Conservation District assisting Landowners within our district and:

- Providing high standards of service for our customers;
- Having stable financial backing to serve local needs;
- Strengthening our partnerships with other natural resource organizations, both governmental and non-governmental;
- Becoming locally perceived as the county leader for natural resource issues; and
- Developing our locally-led watershed planning and implementation process throughout the District.”

Values of the Wahkiakum Conservation District

- Rural character of the district
- Wise use of natural resources
- Information and education
- Economic viability for community and landowners.

Natural Resource Priorities and Goals:

- Provide leadership in sound resource management for agriculture, forestry, and other land uses emphasizing soil, water, air, plants, animals and human considerations.
- Maintain economic viability for community and landowners.
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- Technical
- Financial
- Education

Critical Geographic Areas: (attached map)

- The entire district

Information – Education Priorities and Goals:

Continue providing community service activities and promote an understanding of land use through sponsorship of forums, meetings, training sessions, and participation in local natural resources oriented events, and use of local media.

- The Conservation District will emphasize education and information sharing when delivering technical assistance to landowners or communities within the district.
- The Conservation District will foster a better working relationship with local media to keep our community informed of natural resource issues, concerns, and opportunities
- The Conservation District will partner with Department of Natural Resources Stewardship Forestry Program and Small Forest Landowners Office to continue to delivery of forestry, technical, educational, and financial assistance. (Forest Stewardship Coached Planning Course)
- The Conservation District will continue to partner with WSU Cooperative Extension to host the “Living off the Land” course and other educational activities.
- The Conservation District will successfully partner to conduct the education/outreach activities including regional Envirothon, county fair, and the annual dinner meeting/banquets.
- Continue to participate when possible in local activities oriented around natural resources (e.g. earth day celebrations, classroom partnerships, and assistance to student groups for tree planting days, annual tree sale)

District Operations Priorities, Goals:

- The Districts’ goals are to be effective and efficient in accounting, grant vouchering, personnel management, Supervisor elections and appointments, Supervisor and Staff training / development, annual audits, and long range and annual planning and reporting. Wahkiakum Conservation District will properly manage public monies.
- Wahkiakum Conservation District will continue to develop and generate capacity needed to adequately meet the needs of our constituents. This includes maintaining the technical staff necessary and generating funds to help implement restoration projects or implement improved management practices to resolve natural resource issues and concerns.

Trends Impacting Conservation in the Wahkiakum Conservation District

- Population continues to rise in rural Wahkiakum County resulting in changing land use, fragmentation into smaller parcel sizes, and increased number of landowners who may not be aware of existing rules and regulations and may be uniformed regarding best management practices.
- Grant competition and complexity: There is increased competition for the local, state, and federal resources made available to address natural resources. Grant funds are becoming increasingly program driven; limiting the ability for the district to effectively utilize funds to address local resource issues and concerns. The district is at risk of being directed by funding rather than local need.
- It appears that the district needs to become more proactive and adopt a legislative strategy if the district intends to comply with provisions of RCW 89.08 and address the natural resource needs within Cowlitz County.

Strategies to Address Trends

Conservation Strategy:

- Continue to develop and encourage communities to participate in Community Watershed Planning (CRM)
- Improve District capacity to provide technical staff capable of meeting the needs of the community we serve.
- Develop and implement a marketing strategy to increase awareness of the district and district activities
 - Develop and implement a mechanism that will serve to inform and educated “new” landowners
- Keep abreast of growth trends in the county, become more active and provide input to county planning,

Funding Strategy: locally attractive, partnerships, guidance to WSCC, Funding proposals

- Strive to make the district more attractive to local government and agencies to secure local funds
- Continue to develop and build working relationships with resource partners to increase capacity and develop efficiencies at providing service to our customers
- Provide guidance to WSCC in the development of funding proposals so that districts may better accomplish their local mission
- Continue developing funding proposals to granting entities to advance the district’s goals and objectives
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Legislative strategy

- Pursue a Legislative Resolution to evaluate state grant strategy vs. intentions. There are increasing numbers of granting entities resulting in less flexibility at resolving local issues and increased administration and project costs.
- Develop a district strategy to effectively engage local, state, and federal elected officials with regards to conservation issues.
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Staffing Needs

- District Manager
- Resource Planner / Technician
- Engineer or Engineer Technician
- Education/Outreach Program Coordinator
- Bookkeeper

Annual Budget Needs

Current Budget needs \$197,000.00/year.

Anticipated Operating Budget based on desired staffing and full office space - \$350,000/year.

Key Decision Makers

Board of Supervisors, district manager, grantees, resource partners, local government, state government, federal government, and local landowners.

Priority Actions – 12 Months

- *Enter a summary of the priority actions needed to start the 5-year plan of the Wahkiakum Conservation District based on the above information.*

Action	Begin Date	End Date
Implement Annual Plan	7/07	6/08
Develop detail actions for incorporation into long range plan	In progress	8/07

Washington Conservation Districts assisting land managers with their conservation choices

Picture of Natural Resource Project